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President: Ms. King (Vice-President) ..... (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)

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In the absence of Ms. Chatardova (Czechia), Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 12: Coordination, programme and other questions (*continued*)

(e) African countries emerging from conflict (E/2018/70; E/2018/L.24)

1. **Mr. Jinga** (Romania), Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, said that in General Assembly resolution 70/262 and Security Council resolution 2282 (2016) on the review of the peacebuilding architecture, States had reaffirmed the Commission's main purpose as an intergovernmental advisory body and had stressed that it should serve a bridging role among the principal organs of the United Nations. That function was particularly relevant to the present discussion.

2. Although the Commission considered situations in many parts of the world, Africa was its main focus and the Sahel remained a clear priority. The Security Council had emphasized the importance of the Commission's convening role in mobilizing deeper commitment and partnership between the United Nations, the countries of the Sahel and other international and regional partners, with a view to advancing implementation of the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel in collaboration with the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel. The case of the Sahel provided an interesting example of collaboration between the Commission and the Economic and Social Council. At a joint meeting held in June 2017, the two bodies had examined ways to overcome the multidimensional challenges facing the Sahel region by addressing the social, economic and environmental causes of the crisis.

3. To enhance synergies in the region, the Commission's session in 2018 would focus exclusively on the Sahel. Member States, representatives of countries in the Sahel, senior United Nations officials and representatives of international and civil society organizations would discuss how to mobilize deeper commitments and partnerships in support of efforts to build and sustain peace in the Sahel, under the umbrella of the United Nations integrated strategy.

4. A number of lessons and good practices had emerged from the Commission's recent work. First, national ownership and leadership in peacebuilding efforts was essential to success. Governments bore primary responsibility for setting priorities and implementing strategies, while the responsibility for sustaining peace was broadly shared by all national stakeholders, as had been confirmed when the Commission had discussed peacebuilding in Colombia. Senior representatives of the Government of Colombia, together with civil society representatives, had highlighted the success of the peace process in that country. Key factors had been the strong national ownership of the process and the existence of robust and democratic institutions.

5. Second, current challenges were often cross-border in nature, since a situation in one country could have implications for others in the same region. The capacity of the United Nations to respond to those challenges must be enhanced in a coherent and strategic manner and collaboration with regional and subregional organizations was therefore important. That matter had been discussed at length during the recent joint meeting of the Commission and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union.

6. Third, the economic and social dimensions of peacebuilding must not be neglected and the Commission was uniquely positioned to provide broad, diverse, long-term and coherent peacebuilding perspectives thanks to its convening and bridging role. He had raised that point in a recent informal interactive dialogue with the Security Council, which had explored practical ways to enhance the advisory role of the Commission during the formation, review and drawdown of peacekeeping operations and special political missions. Some of the elements that had emerged were that: (a) the added value and relevance of the Commission's advice lay in its capacity to bring to the attention of the Security Council the perspectives and priorities of host countries, as well as a longer-term, more holistic approach to discussions on the multidimensional nature of peacebuilding and to addressing the root causes of conflicts; (b) the Commission was expected to complement the information contained in the reports of the Secretary-General by sharing its peacebuilding perspectives when the Security Council was considering the formation, review and drawdown of missions in countries under the consideration of both bodies; and (c) as underscored by the situation in the Sudan and the experience of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the root causes of conflict must be tackled and peacebuilding efforts should not wait until mission withdrawal began.

7. The perspective of the Economic and Social Council on the economic and social challenges of peacebuilding should also be an important element of the Commission's advice to the Security Council. He encouraged the seven members of the Economic and

Social Council that were also members of the Peacebuilding Commission to play a leading role in fostering closer cooperation between the two bodies. As one of those seven members, Romania would do its part.

8. Gender was an important dimension of peacebuilding. The Commission had adopted an internal gender strategy in 2016 and the Peacebuilding Fund had exceeded its own target of allocating 15 per cent of its funds to gender-focused programmes.

9. The Commission stood ready to continue its collaboration with the Economic and Social Council, with a view to discussing ways to support conflict-affected countries and to enhance coherence in the United Nations system.

10. **Mr. Khan** (United Nations Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator ad interim and World Food Programme Country Representative for South Sudan), speaking via video link from Juba and introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of integrated, coherent and coordinated support to South Sudan by the United Nations system (E/2018/70), said that maintaining a ceasefire remained a challenge in South Sudan. Fighting and violence continued in many parts of the country and had become increasingly fragmented and localized. In June 2017, the leaders of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development had endorsed the establishment of the High-level Revitalization Forum to reinvigorate the 2015 Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (Peace Agreement). Subsequently, the parties had signed the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Access, which committed them to ceasing all hostilities and revitalizing the implementation of the Peace Agreement. An agreement on the outstanding issues relating to security and governance was being negotiated in Khartoum.

11. The crisis in South Sudan had continued to worsen and required a massive, and growing, humanitarian operation. The region was hosting more than 2.5 million South Sudanese refugees and 1.8 million people were internally displaced. Protection threats were intensifying in scale and in scope, and the population continued to be exposed to violations of international humanitarian and human rights law.

12. The economic situation remained challenging. Government spending for the 2018/19 financial year was estimated at only $268 million, which was around one tenth of the pre-independence figure. The national currency had continued to depreciate against the United States dollar owing to high levels of central bank borrowing, and April 2018 was the twenty-ninth month of triple-digit year-on-year inflation.

13. By the end of April 2018, some 7 million people had been at risk of hunger without sustained humanitarian assistance and access. In 2016, the under-5 mortality rate had been estimated at 91 per 1,000 live births, and the situation had since deteriorated. However, the longest cholera outbreak ever recorded in South Sudan had finally been declared over in February 2018, thanks to collaboration to enhance response and surveillance and deploy rapid response teams.

14. The United Nations country team and its partners had renewed efforts to strengthen support for recovery and resilience, with a growing focus on supporting local peacebuilding to mitigate increasingly localized conflicts, and with investment from the Peacebuilding Fund.

15. The United Nations had supported the Government in developing guidelines for mainstreaming disaster risk reduction into national sustainable development plans and finalizing the national disaster risk management policy. Support had also been provided to kick-start implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. The Government had finalized its three-year national development strategy and the recently presented national budget would be the first to support the implementation of the national development strategy.

16. United Nations support for peacebuilding, recovery and development was guided by the recently endorsed United Nations cooperation framework for the 2019–2021 period, which would shortly be signed by the Minister for Finance and Planning, the resident coordinator and the heads of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. The implementation of the framework would result in a new way of working to ensure greater synergies between humanitarian and development actors.

17. The United Nations country team would also further strengthen cooperation with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) through joint programmes and other joint activities, as well as with other actors with political, security and peacebuilding mandates.

Draft decision E/2018/L.24: African countries emerging from conflict

18. **The President** said that the draft decision had no programme budget implications. The phrase "a report on

the subject" in the third line should be replaced with "an oral report on the subject".

19. *Draft decision E/2018/L.24, as orally corrected, was adopted.*

(d) Long-term programme of support for Haiti (E/2018/75; E/2018/L.18)

20. **Mr. Blanchard** (Canada), Chair of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, introduced the draft resolution contained in document E/2018/L.18, in which the Council would welcome the annual report of the Advisory Group, contained in document E/2018/75, and the recommendations contained therein, and would decide to extend the mandate of the Advisory Group for another year.

21. Introducing the report of the Advisory Group, he said that during its visits to Washington, D.C. and Haiti, the Group had witnessed major efforts by Haitians to guarantee their country's future development and prosperity. More than a year after the elections and the installation of a new Government, important milestones had been reached in the country's efforts to make sustainable progress in its development. Haiti had an opportunity to undertake a real transition, as a result of which it would cease to be a recipient of humanitarian aid and would embark on a path of sustainable development. However, the situation remained fragile and the country continued to face a host of challenges that affected its socioeconomic development. The population was calling for immediate improvements in its quality of life. The Government should respond to those expectations quickly and effectively, with support from the United Nations and the international community. There was an urgent need for increased alignment of actions to ensure the delivery of immediate results to the people of Haiti.

22. The Group's recommendations included encouraging the Government to take the leading role in national development and to carry out urgent reforms in critical sectors, including justice, in order to strengthen governance institutions. The international community should ensure that it provided more stable and predictable financing to Haiti. It should also make sure that its efforts were coordinated and that international aid was aligned with national Government priorities, as underlined by the Haitian authorities themselves. Lastly, the Group encouraged the United Nations to improve its coordination and consultation with the Government, especially in consideration of the two-year exit strategy of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH). The country team should have the required resources and must be prepared for the departure of MINUJUSTH.

23. During its visit to Haiti, the Advisory Group had observed several community projects established by the United Nations team to combat the spread of cholera. It had been particularly impressed by the consultative and participatory approach developed by the United Nations country team as a whole to ensure the success of those projects and their ownership by the local communities, and it commended the United Nations Special Envoy for Haiti for her leadership and commitment. Even though statistics showed the success of the new approach, the international community should continue to finance anti-cholera measures in Haiti with a view to eliminating the disease.

24. In order to be successful, the MINUJUSTH progressive exit strategy must be implemented in a responsible, planned manner, in close collaboration with the country team, the Government of Haiti and the international community. Sustainable economic development remained crucial for the prosperity and stability of Haiti. More needed to be done to unleash and maximize the country's immense economic potential in order to achieve the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

25. **Mr. Tran Ba Huy** (United Nations Resident Coordinator ad interim and World Food Programme (WFP) Representative in Haiti), speaking via video link from Port-au-Prince to brief the Council on the situation in Haiti, said that violent demonstrations had broken out from 6 to 8 July 2018, in response to the Government's decision to reduce fuel subsidies. Those events had paralyzed the capital and led to the Government's subsequent reversal of the decision. In an address to the nation on 14 July 2018, the President, Jovenel Moïse, had confirmed that he had accepted the resignation of the Prime Minister, Jack Guy Lafontant, and his Government. President Moïse had also expressed his commitment to consultation with all sectors in order to form an inclusive government with a mission to fight poverty and develop agriculture, energy and infrastructure in Haiti.

26. With regard to the national economy, a significant fiscal deficit was forecast for 2018, despite the Government's efforts, and resource mobilization remained a challenge, with internal revenues reaching only 12.9 per cent of gross domestic product. As of December 2017, external debt stood at $2.6 billion, the majority of which was owed to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela under the PetroCaribe programme. Notwithstanding, planned government investment in the

agricultural sector and normal rainfall during the fourth quarter of 2017 had led to increased agricultural output.

27. In terms of regional integration, President Moïse's advocacy during his tenure as Chair of the Caribbean Community had resulted in an agreement to convene a special session on the free movement of people, goods, services and capital throughout the region. Furthermore, in a recent meeting with the Comité d'efficacité de l'aide to strengthen aid coordination, President Moïse had called for greater alignment of external cooperation with government priorities and national systems. The Government and its partners had undertaken to revitalize three pilot thematic and sectoral bodies, including on the rule of law, and to establish a dialogue mechanism on the legislative agenda and a joint committee to prepare a draft law on aid cooperation and governance.

28. Through activities including a Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support mission deployed in January 2018, the United Nations continued to support the Government's efforts to define national priorities and incorporate the Sustainable Development Goals into national planning processes and policies. The mission report had been shared with the Government and would help to guide the process going forward. Moreover, the transition to a non-peacekeeping United Nations presence in Haiti would be a defining moment for the country's development and stability. The Security Council, in its resolution 2410 (2018), by means of which it had renewed the mandate of MINUJUSTH for one year, had established significant transition planning and reporting requirements. The members of the Secretary-General's Executive Committee had identified the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) as the main programmatic planning tool to ensure an integrated approach to the MINUJUSTH transition. In that respect, MINUJUSTH-mandated areas and priorities had been included in the joint work plan on governance, as part of the UNDAF annual implementation review, and inter-agency working groups would carry out quarterly reviews of the results achieved. The senior management of MINUJUSTH and the United Nations country team would continue to assess progress in implementing the UNDAF and would identify bottlenecks before engaging with the Government and with national and international actors. In addition, a security transition plan was being developed to consider the operational support currently provided by the police component of MINUJUSTH.

29. The humanitarian community continued to help build State disaster preparedness capacity through the provision of support to the Directorate of Civil Protection. Collaborative efforts between the Haitian authorities and international partners to defeat cholera had resulted in the continuation of the downward trend in the disease first observed in late 2016. If that trend were maintained through the cyclone season, it would represent a further step toward zero-transmission.

30. The key to sustainable improvement of the social and economic situation in Haiti was good governance and increased capacity of national institutions to develop public policies on domestic resource mobilization, border control and various other areas of national development. The international community could contribute by building the capacity of national institutions and systems and ultimately allowing official development assistance to be channelled through them. Finally, in order to ensure a successful transition, a resource mobilization strategy prioritizing funding approaches that strengthened national capacities was being prepared.

31. **Mr. Regis** (Observer for Haiti), recalling that Haiti had been the first State to receive a United Nations technical assistance mission, in 1948, said that many of the conclusions and recommendations of that initial mission, such as the need for agricultural development, remained absolute priorities for Haiti.

32. The Advisory Group had always taken its mandate seriously and, since its reactivation in 2004, had focused on social and political stability and security, consolidation of the rule of law, protection of human rights and the establishment of the conditions for sustainable development. However, public investments, particularly in essential infrastructure such as water, electricity, health care and education, had not yet recovered strongly, and growth remained low. That situation affected the most vulnerable population groups, while the stagnation in poverty levels exacerbated the risks of long-term instability, as evidenced in the unfortunate events of 6 to 8 July 2018.

33. The Advisory Group could contribute powerfully to the creation of a new partnership framework which would permit the country to catch up, substantially increase national production, build key public infrastructure, increase its capacity to attract foreign investment, and support entrepreneurship, thereby providing the Haitian people with fresh prospects of improving their living conditions. While the development of Haiti could be achieved only by Haitians themselves, the support of the international community, taking into consideration the priorities and programmes developed by the Government, remained crucial for the achievement of the national development objectives and the Sustainable Development Goals.

34. In conclusion, he welcomed the report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti (E/2018/75). In particular, he noted the call for more effective coordination between the Government and the United Nations system on the ground to ensure better alignment of aid with national development priorities and the 2030 Agenda, so as to reinforce mutual responsibility. Such alignment would also provide new sources of financing for anti-cholera measures and necessary institutional reforms. He urged the Advisory Group to strengthen its advocacy with bilateral and multilateral partners of Haiti in order to ensure that international cooperation in the area of sustainable development was adequate, coherent, well coordinated and effective, constituting part of a real drive towards the development of the country's capacities in key sectors.

35. **Mr. Escalante Hasbún** (El Salvador) said that, as a member of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, his delegation had participated in the recent visit to Haiti. The clear commitment of the Haitian Government to achieving progress in the social, political, economic and environmental areas should be based on a long-term vision and strategic framework to ensure alignment of its efforts with the relevant aspects of the 2030 Agenda, in keeping with national priorities. In addition, continued support for MINUJUSTH and the United Nations team in Haiti was essential for the alignment of their work with the country's development priorities. He commended the member States of the United Nations for their efforts to maintain the budget of MINUJUSTH, pursuant to the mandates established by the Security Council to prioritize the police and justice sectors.

36. El Salvador would continue to support Haiti both through the Group of Friends of Haiti and bilaterally, specifically in cooperation with the Haitian police. The international community should continue to assist the country in its efforts to achieve sustainable development and build resilience.

Draft resolution E/2018/L.18: Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti

37. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Council) announced that Brazil, Mexico, Peru and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines had informed the Council secretariat prior to the meeting that they wished to join the sponsors. Colombia, El Salvador, France, Rwanda and Senegal also wished to become sponsors.

38. Delivering a statement of programme budget implications in accordance with rule 31 of the Council's rules of procedure, she said that, should the draft resolution be adopted, it was estimated that the support to be provided to the Ad Hoc Advisory Group would consist of: (a) travel for members of the Group and up to two staff members of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to meet with the international financial institutions and the Organization of American States in 2019 and undertake a mission to Haiti in the same year, and (b) meeting support services in Haiti.

39. The total resource requirements for the consultative missions to Haiti and Washington, D.C. in 2019 were estimated at $39,200, for which provision had not been made in the programme budget for 2018–2019. It was, however, expected that those requirements would be met within the resources approved under section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2018–2019.

40. With respect to paragraph 14 of the draft resolution, in which the Secretary-General was requested to continue to support the activities of the Group adequately and within existing resources, the Council's attention was drawn to the provisions of section VI of General Assembly resolution 45/248 B and subsequent resolutions, the most recent of which was resolution 72/261, in which the Assembly had reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee was the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters and had also reaffirmed the mandates of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

41. *Draft resolution E/2018/L.18 was adopted.*

Agenda item 14: Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations (*continued*) (A/73/84-E/2018/72)

Agenda item 16: Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan
(A/73/87-E/2018/69; E/2018/L.19 and E/2018/L.27)

42. **Mr. Alami** (Director, Emerging and Conflict-Related Issues Section, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)), introducing the note by the Secretary-General on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/73/87-E/2018/69), said that Palestinians continued to experience Israeli discriminatory policies and practices, including the

application of two legal systems, which granted more rights to Israelis than to Palestinians, and discriminatory planning and zoning policies that de facto prevented Palestinians in Area C and East Jerusalem from building or undertaking development.

43. The Israeli army and security forces, in violation of international law, had continued to use excessive force, including unlawful killings, and Palestinians had suffered a sharp increase in attacks and harassment from Israeli settlers, with almost no accountability. Large numbers of Palestinians, including children, were being held in Israeli prisons, some of them in indefinite administrative detention. Since 2013, complaints about the torture and ill treatment of Palestinian prisoners by Israeli security services had quadrupled.

44. Since 2009, thousands of people had been displaced owing to the demolitions of Palestinian homes and other structures by Israelis, contributing to the coercive environment in the West Bank. Israeli authorities cited the lack of building permits as a reason to demolish Palestinian homes, though such permits were nearly impossible to obtain. Israel also used demolitions and the confiscation of property as a punitive measure against the families and neighbours of Palestinians suspected of carrying out attacks. Such acts could amount to collective punishment, which was prohibited by international law. Those measures, combined with other practices, had also led to what might amount to the forcible transfer of Palestinians, a grave breach of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War that constituted a war crime. In March 2018, the Knesset had passed a new law allowing the Interior Minister to revoke the permanent residency of Palestinians in East Jerusalem if they had committed, inter alia, any "acts that constituted breach of trust against the State of Israel".

45. Israeli settlement activity in the Occupied Palestinian Territory violated international law and was a major obstacle to peace. Israeli policies also encouraged population growth among the settlers, resulting in a growth rate that surpassed that of both the overall population of Israel and the Palestinian population in the West Bank. In May 2017, Israeli authorities had approved the establishment of a new settlement in Area C for the first time since 1992. In February 2017, the Knesset had adopted a law extending its jurisdiction to matters concerning the private property of Palestinians living under Israeli occupation.

46. The blockade affecting 2 million Palestinian people in Gaza amounted to collective punishment, undermining their rights and affecting the conditions in which they lived. Requirements for the entry of raw materials and the travel of traders and merchants had hindered reconstruction and development projects and programmes in Gaza. In 2017, exits through the Erez crossing had fallen by almost 50 per cent compared with the previous year and the number of valid permits issued to traders had drastically dropped between 2015 and 2017. The approval rate for medical patients allowed through the Erez crossing had also fallen by almost half between 2012 and 2017.

47. The Israeli army had enforced access-restricted areas along the Gaza border fence and at sea, undermining the right of Palestinian farmers and fishermen to a livelihood. In the West Bank, the construction of the wall, and other constraints on the movement of Palestinians, undermined economic activity and access to basic services. By the end of January 2017, 60 km of roads in the West Bank had been designated for exclusive or near-exclusive use by Israelis, while 17.5 per cent of the West Bank was covered by Israeli firing zones and was off limits to Palestinians.

48. Israeli policies restricting the repair, rehabilitation and construction of basic water infrastructure in the West Bank resulted in a lack of access to water. In Area C, 95,000 Palestinians received less than 50 litres of water per capita per day, which was half of the minimum recommended by the World Health Organization. Forty per cent of Palestinians in East Jerusalem were not legally connected to the water grid. In Gaza, 95 per cent of water had become unfit for human consumption.

49. A quarter of the Palestinian population in Gaza was unconnected to the sewage network and pollution levels were four times higher than the environmental health standard. Every day, 108 million litres of raw or poorly treated waste water were discharged into the Mediterranean Sea, and 73 per cent of the shoreline was contaminated by sewage.

50. Some 2.5 million Palestinians, roughly half of the population, needed humanitarian assistance. Eighty per cent of the population in Gaza relied on aid and lived on a per capita gross domestic product lower than the 1994 level. The unemployment and poverty rates in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip, were very high. In 2016, one third of the population had been food insecure, a rate that was higher in Gaza and refugee camps. The population that received food aid from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East had increased from approximately 80,000 people in 2000 to more than 993,000 people in 2017.

51. The Gaza blockade coupled with intra-Palestinian division had led to a sharp deterioration in the availability and quality of health care and a shortage of medical staff, supplies, machines, drugs and disposables. A total of 260,000 Palestinians relied on humanitarian health care owing to the fragmentation of the West Bank, mobility restrictions and lack of infrastructure.

52. Israel actively supported illegal settlement activity in the occupied Syrian Golan, where, by 2017, an estimated 23,000 Israelis lived in 34 illegal settlements. The 25,000 Syrian residents of the occupied Syrian Golan faced discriminatory policies relating to land and water allocation, planning and zoning, and demining efforts. The Israeli authorities restricted Syrian usage of land for farming to 45,000 acres, while Israeli settlers were allowed to use 350,000 acres. As a result, Syrian villages were overcrowded, had strained infrastructure and experienced harsh economic and social conditions.

53. The 51-year Israeli occupation had had a detrimental effect on the social and economic development of the people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the occupied Syrian Golan. While humanitarian and development efforts were key to alleviating the suffering of the Palestinians and Syrians living under occupation, cycles of violence would not end until the roots of such violence were addressed. The United Nations maintained its long-standing position that a lasting and comprehensive peace could be achieved only through a negotiated, two-State solution, realizing the vision of two States living side by side in peace, security and mutual recognition, with Jerusalem as the capital of both Israel and Palestine.

54. **Ms. Shurbaji** (Observer for the Syrian Arab Republic) said that there had been an improvement in the methods used to prepare the report (A/73/87-E/2018/69). Information provided by the Syrian Arab Republic had been taken into account and reference had been made to the situation faced by the inhabitants of the occupied Syrian Golan. Information had also been drawn from a wider variety of sources. Israeli occupation practices were an integral part of the illegal settlement and annexation policies of Israel. Discriminatory laws were imposed on the inhabitants of the occupied Syrian Golan, while illegal settlers enjoyed various advantages. The Israeli authorities attempted to control and exploit all natural resources in the occupied Syrian Golan, imposed their own education curricula and sought to suppress Syrian identity by imposing Israeli nationality on Syrian residents of the Golan.

55. Future reports should include a more precise legal description of the situation, pursuant to the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions, in particular Security Council resolution 497 (1981). While the authors of the report described practices in violation of international humanitarian law, such as the appropriation of land, restrictions on planning and construction, and the unjust allocation of water for Syrian farmers by Israel, they failed to condemn them explicitly or state the Organization's official position on them. One of the most serious of those practices had been the announcement by the Israeli Interior Ministry that, for the first time since 1967, elections would be held in four towns in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights on 30 October 2018, in clear violation of Security Council resolution 497 (1981). The Palestinians and Syrians living under Israeli occupation needed the United Nations to demand respect for international law and agreements. Furthermore, the report did not mention the arrests and imprisonment of Syrians living in the occupied Syrian Golan, dozens of whom remained in Israeli prisons. Lastly, it should be noted that Israeli forces had recently been involved in transferring members of the so-called White Helmets, an organization linked to the Nusrah Front, to a third country. The Council must take a firm stance in denouncing all such practices; otherwise the goal of "leaving no one behind" would not be achieved and the 2030 Agenda would not be implemented.

56. **Ms. Fisher-Tsin** (Observer for Israel) said that her delegation was deeply disappointed, but unfortunately not surprised, by the report, which was full of shameless bias and presented a deliberately distorted picture of the situation on the ground. The report failed to mention the many important areas in which the Palestinian Authority and the State of Israel successfully collaborated to improve the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people, including through joint projects on energy, telecommunications, trade, agriculture and employment. For example, there had been a groundbreaking agreement on debt settlement and the sale of electricity, and a trilateral arrangement with Jordan and Japan for a train-the-trainer programme to teach Palestinian agriculture instructors the latest methods of efficient agricultural protection. Israeli high-tech companies were also hiring Palestinian software engineers who worked remotely from home. Those examples did not fit the script that had already been written. The report blamed Israel for all the problems in Palestine and disregarded the fact that the Palestinian Authority had refused to join the Israeli-Palestinian Joint Water Committee and repeatedly postponed decisions on proposals to improve water infrastructure.

57. Furthermore, Hamas was never mentioned in the report despite the fact that it was an internationally

recognized terrorist group that ruled Gaza and still controlled the Palestinians through fear and violence, denying them basic human rights. The authors of the report had also ignored the fact that during the reporting period the number of rockets fired by Hamas had been the highest in four years. Those omissions were highly relevant to the subject of the report and the authors' obvious and deliberate bias must not be ignored. The well-being of the Palestinian people was a serious issue that must be treated seriously.

58. The section of the report on the occupied Syrian Golan was even more absurd. The authors had chosen to base themselves on inaccurate information provided by a murderous Syrian regime that the international community had found responsible for gassing its own people. It was ironic that Israel was targeted in the report though it had been providing humanitarian aid to Syrian civilians and had recently helped rescue 400 volunteers of the Syrian humanitarian non-governmental organization known as the White Helmets, whose lives had been threatened by the Syrian regime simply for providing assistance to their war-torn communities.

59. The report was thus just another example of the ongoing one-sided and inflammatory attacks against Israel at the United Nations, which provided a platform for the Palestinians to win cheap political points instead of helping their own people.

60. **Mr. Bamya** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that Palestine did cooperate with Israel, as prisoners cooperated with their jailer. Within the joint committees mentioned, Israel had given itself a veto right; the rights and development of an oppressed people were thus subject to the goodwill of its oppressors, contrary to the concept of self-determination. Delegations that had recently gained their independence would remember speeches being made about the generosity of colonizers in aiding their development. His delegation hoped that Israel would learn from history. Nothing could compensate a people for being prevented from living freely and in dignity on their own land.

61. An occupation was generally understood as temporary control by one party to a conflict over part or all of the territory of another party to that conflict, during armed hostilities. The rules and principles that existed to prevent the perpetuation of the situation included the principle of inadmissibility of the acquisition of land by force, the principle that the occupant did not acquire sovereignty over the territory it occupied, the right of peoples to permanent sovereignty over their natural resources and the obligation for the occupying Power to administer the occupied territory for the benefit of the local population. The Israeli occupation violated those rules since what the Israeli authorities sought was the annexation of the maximum land with the minimum Palestinian population, through the forcible transfer and confinement of the Palestinian people and the expansion of Jewish Israeli settlements. By doing so, Israel was undermining the contiguity of the Palestinian territory and taking control of most of its natural resources. Its illegal colonial occupation was being administered for the benefit of the colonizers rather than for the occupied people. That situation, coupled with discrimination based on religion and origin, as demonstrated by the adoption of the Israeli "Jewish nation-state law", was reminiscent of apartheid.

62. As indicated in the report before the Council (A/73/87-E/2018/69), the application of two different legal systems in the same territory, on the sole basis of nationality or origin, was discriminatory and violated the principle of equality before the law. The report also correctly indicated that Israeli planning and zoning policies were discriminatory and incompatible with international law. Their objective was to allow settlements to flourish at the expense of the Palestinian State. The economic and social repercussions of such a colonial regime were far-reaching and affected all Palestinian rights, including the right to life, political and civil rights, economic and social rights, access to environment and technology and the ability to build on Palestinian land.

63. The Palestinian economy was undermined by restrictions on movement and access. The Palestinian people faced forcible displacement, home demolitions, arbitrary detention, unlawful killing and injury, with many in Gaza suffering permanent disabilities after being shot during participation in a peaceful protest against the Israeli occupation and blockade. Gaza was on the brink of collapse. The decade-long blockade and repeated military aggressions had placed pressure on infrastructure and caused the loss of livelihoods, while the population's coping capacities, hopes and dreams had been depleted. The Jordan Valley, the most fertile part of the Palestinian territory, was off limits for Palestinians but available to Israeli companies, which were selling the products made from those Palestinian resources on international markets.

64. The Security Council had called on States to distinguish between the territory of the State of Israel and the territories occupied since 1967. His delegation urged all States to uphold their responsibilities to respect international law through non-recognition of and non-assistance for illegal actions and through advancing accountability, including by ensuring that their

Governments, companies and citizens were not complicit with the Israeli occupation and violations.

65. The Palestinian people had demonstrated their resilience for over seven decades. Despite hardships, they were creative, able, educated and had an entrepreneurial spirit. If not for the occupation, they would thrive through innovation, tourism, industry, arts and sports. A free Palestine, which would be sovereign, in control of its resources and no longer dependent on aid, would transform the region. That objective deserved the complete dedication of States as much as the worsening reality deserved outrage and opposition.

66. Palestine was committed to international law without discrimination or exception, believed in a rules-based order and was against the unlawful killing of civilians. It was also against the transfer of the population of the occupying Power into the occupied territory and against any forcible transfer. It was against the withholding of bodies and arbitrary detention. It doubted the capacity of Israel to make the same pronouncements in view of its attacks on Palestinian civilians and the hundreds of Palestinian bodies withheld, preventing families from being able to bury them in dignity. The military courts of Israel had a conviction rate of 99 per cent for Palestinians. The judicial system had exerted its power to detain members of parliament, human rights defenders, children and women and its integrity had been seriously questioned by United Nations experts and B'Tselem, an Israeli human rights organization. He called on all delegations to vote in favour of draft resolution E/2018/L.19, which was grounded in international law, and to reject any amendment which would perpetuate a biased, incomplete narrative of the conflict.

Draft resolution E/2018/L.19: Economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan

67. **The President** said that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

68. **Mr. El Ashmawy** (Observer for Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, introduced the draft resolution. He said that, while most paragraphs were similar to those in the previous year's resolution, some updates reflected the current realities on the ground.

69. Since the issuance of the draft resolution, paragraph 14 had been revised to read: "Calls for urgent attention to the plight and the rights, in accordance with international law, of prisoners and detainees, and calls for efforts between the two sides for the further release of prisoners and detainees, and deplores the practice of withholding the bodies of those killed, and calls for the release of the bodies that have not yet been returned to their relatives, in line with international humanitarian law and human rights law, in order to ensure dignified closure in accordance with their religious beliefs and traditions".

70. The Group looked forward to the adoption by consensus of the draft resolution, as orally revised, in order to send a message to the occupying Power and help alleviate the economic and social hardships of the Palestinian and Syrian civilian populations, ultimately contributing to international efforts to bring an end to the injustice.

71. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America), speaking on a point of order, requested clarification from the President on whether the observer for Egypt was proposing an amendment.

72. **The President** asked the observer for Egypt to clarify whether he was proposing a revision or an amendment.

73. **Mr. El Ashmawy** (Observer for Egypt) said that he was proposing a revision.

The meeting was suspended at 11.55 a.m. and resumed at 12.10 p.m.

74. **The President** asked whether the Council wished to consider the oral revision proposed by the observer for Egypt.

75. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America), said that her delegation objected to the Council's consideration of the proposed oral amendment, on the grounds that it had not been properly circulated in advance. Under rule 54 of the Council's rules of procedure, amendments — whether they were called revisions or amendments — must be circulated to all members at least 24 hours before they were to be discussed or put to the vote, unless the Council decided otherwise. Member States should consider the consequences of disregarding that rule, which gave members of the Council the opportunity to review and consider the substance of proposed amendments.

76. **Mr. Bessedik** (Algeria), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that, in the absence of consensus among Council members regarding whether the Council should consider a proposal, the correct procedure was to vote on the issue.

77. **The President** suggested that the meeting should be suspended to allow for the circulation of the proposed

revision, in line with advice received from the Office of Legal Affairs. The Council would then vote on whether to consider the proposed revision at the current meeting.

The meeting was suspended at 12.15 p.m. and resumed at 12.25 p.m.

78. **The President** said that the proposed oral revision had been circulated in writing and that the Council would proceed to vote on whether to consider that proposal at the current meeting. A recorded vote had been requested.

79. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote before the voting, said that her delegation continued to object to the consideration of the proposed oral amendment. Rule 54 of the Council's rules of procedure allowed the Council's elected members an opportunity to form their position on the substance of a proposed amendment. If certain States, or non-member entities, were permitted to violate the Council's rules of procedure with impunity, then chaos would ensue. In the interest of good governance and transparency, the proposed amendment should not be considered by the Council at the current meeting.

80. It was also a matter of concern that certain member States that normally strongly condemned terrorism by Hamas, seemed to be involved in proposing the said amendment, which appeared to have been concocted by unaccountable entities that were neither States Members of the United Nations nor members of the Council. Her delegation urged all member States to reject such manipulations, which undermined the integrity of the Council's working methods. Furthermore, if current actions were indicative of the manner in which the Palestinian delegation intended to exercise the presidency of the Group of 77 and China, which it was poised to assume in 2019, then that Group should reconsider its choice of leadership. Sadly, it fell upon the United States to defend the integrity of the Council and its working methods. The United States would defend the rights of member States to be given proper notice of substantive changes to texts and urged all Council members to stand up for their rights in that regard. Finally, she noted that the Israeli delegation had followed the rules of procedure by submitting its own amendment 24 hours in advance.

81. **Mr. Bamya** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that it was important not to mischaracterize the proposed revision, which was in fact an effort by the Group of 77 and China to achieve compromise. It should be noted that Israel — which also was not an elected member of the Council — had asked members to oppose the draft resolution even if the amendment it had circulated was approved. Unfortunately, neither Israel nor the United States had been willing to compromise or engage in negotiations. The Group, in contrast, had taken note of the substance of the Israeli amendment and, where the issues were in line with international law, it had discussed them with other partners before revising its own text in an effort of compromise. It was not the first time an oral revision had been presented on the day of the vote; that happened repeatedly at the United Nations, especially when last-minute efforts were made to achieve compromise. He therefore called on all Council members to support the consideration of the proposed revision and to recognize the value of open dialogue that allowed for such compromises to emerge even in the last hours before a vote was to be held.

82. **Mr. Danon** (Observer for Israel) said that the current attempt to bypass the rules of procedure was unfortunate. The amendment proposed by the Group of 77 and China did not address the issue at stake, which was that Hamas was holding Israeli civilians, without releasing information on their whereabouts, and preventing proper burial of Israeli soldiers. It was therefore Hamas that must be named in the draft resolution.

83. *A recorded vote was taken on whether to consider the oral revision to draft resolution E/2018/L.19 at the current meeting.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Czechia, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Guyana, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

Against:

United States of America.

Abstaining:

Canada, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, Rwanda.

84. *The Council decided, by 40 votes to 1, with 5 abstentions, to consider the oral revision to draft resolution E/2018/L.19 at the current meeting.*

85. **Mr. López Ortiz** (Spain), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said that European Union members of the Council would support the draft resolution with the understanding that the use of the term "Palestine"

should not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine. In addition, such usage was without prejudice to the individual positions of European Union member States on that issue and, consequently, on the question of validity of an accession to the conventions and treaties mentioned in the draft resolution. Moreover, the European Union had not expressed a legal qualification with respect to the use of the term "forced displacement" in the draft resolution and had not expressed itself on the use of certain legal terms therein. In addition, the European Union and its member States understood the term "Palestinian Government" to refer to the Palestinian Authority.

86. The European Union had worked in an open, transparent and constructive manner in negotiating the draft resolution, and had suggested amendments to improve the text while addressing the legitimate concerns of both sides. The European Union believed that the current revised version of the draft resolution was a balanced reflection of the negotiations. It would therefore abstain on any separate additional amendment on which the Council might be asked to vote. With that understanding, the European Union supported the revised draft resolution and the States members of the European Union that were members of the Council would vote in favour of it.

87. **Mr. Danon** (Observer for Israel), introducing the amendment contained in document E/2018/L.27, said that draft resolution E/2018/L.19 was one of the many anti-Israel resolutions submitted every year at the United Nations. While the draft resolution mentioned Gaza at length, it failed to mention the grave humanitarian crimes committed by Hamas, an internationally recognized terrorist organization that continued to hold hostage two Israeli civilians, Abera Mengistu and Hisham al-Sayed, both of whom had mental health problems, and refused to return the abducted bodies of two Israeli soldiers, Hadar Goldin and Oron Shaul. His delegation therefore wished to insert, in the draft resolution, an amendment that was of a humanitarian nature and fell under the Council's mandate. He called on all Council members to support the amendment, since failure to mention Hamas and to call for the release of the Israelis held in Gaza would detract from the Council's legitimacy.

88. **The President** said that a recorded vote had been requested on the amendment contained in document E/2018/L.27.

89. **Mr. Bamya** (Observer for the State of Palestine) said that Israel would have a stronger argument if it was not withholding dozens of Palestinian bodies, in a policy that had been applied for years and was permitted under Israeli law. All withheld bodies should be released, as was called for in the revision to the draft resolution.

90. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America), speaking in explanation of the vote before the voting, said that the draft resolution made no mention of the actions of Hamas, which did nothing to better the lives of the Palestinian people and served to make such improvements impossible, owing to the ongoing commitment of Hamas to the destruction of the State of Israel. The Council should, at the very least, hold Hamas accountable for keeping prisoners. Her delegation, which called on Hamas to return Israeli soldiers and civilians to their families immediately, would vote in support of the Israeli amendment. All member States should make it clear where they stood with regard to Hamas by also voting in favour of the amendment.

91. *A recorded vote was taken on the amendment contained in document E/2018/L.27.*

In favour:

Canada, Colombia, Mexico, United States of America, Uruguay.

Against:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Chad, Ecuador, Guyana, Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

Abstaining:

Andorra, Belgium, Chile, China, Czechia, Denmark, El Salvador, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Spain, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

92. *The amendment contained in document E/2018/L.27 was rejected by 18 votes to 5, with 23 abstentions.*

93. **Ms. Herity** (Secretary of the Council) announced that Turkey had joined the sponsors of draft resolution E/2018/L.19.

94. **The President** said that a recorded vote had been requested on draft resolution E/2018/L.19, as orally revised.

95. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote before the voting, said that her delegation was disappointed at the presentation of a one-sided and biased draft resolution and was unable to support it. It was also very concerned at the decidedly anti-Israel bias within ESCWA, which was apparent in its report and in the draft resolution; such

bias did nothing to advance the aspirations of the Palestinians and Israelis for a more secure, peaceful and prosperous future together. The draft resolution and the report were unbalanced and unfairly singled Israel out in a forum that should not be politicized. The document would serve only to inflame both sides of the conflict and complicate the shared goal of peace.

96. The United States shared with many members of the international community the goal of a lasting and comprehensive peace between Israel and the Palestinians. A comprehensive agreement that ended the conflict could be achieved only through direct bilateral negotiations. Resolutions, reports and proceedings such as those seen at the present meeting were so consistently biased and counterproductive that they had no place in the discourse and would only delay the day when Israel and the Palestinians could peacefully coexist.

97. Billions of dollars had been invested in Gaza, yet, as the report itself noted, over half the population still lived below the poverty line. Rather than blaming Israel in resolution after resolution at the United Nations, perhaps ESCWA should look at the primary culprit, Hamas, which needed to acknowledge that the existence of Israel was a permanent reality and that the Palestinian Authority was the legitimate governing body in the Gaza Strip. Hamas should stop diverting funds intended for infrastructure to the purchase of weapons or other nefarious uses, and work towards peace and the prosperity of its own citizens rather than nursing its sense of grievance and victimhood.

98. The United States stood ready to help foster economic security and would work with all parties to improve conditions and promote the cause of peace. However, resolutions such as the one before the Council did nothing to advance that goal. Her delegation therefore had no choice but to vote against the draft resolution.

99. *A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution E/2018/L.19, as orally revised.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Czechia, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Ghana, Guyana, India, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam.

Against:

Canada, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Rwanda.

100. *Draft resolution E/2018/L.19, as orally revised, was adopted by 45 votes to 2, with 2 abstentions.*

101. **Mr. Zalyalov** (Russian Federation) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution on the basis of the principled position of the Russian Federation regarding a Middle East settlement. However, it had abstained on the amendment proposed by Israel, which did not belong in the draft resolution.

102. **Mr. Locsin** (Philippines) said that his Government was committed to the two-State solution and was opposed to provocations that caused delays and made the likelihood of a resolution to the conflict remoter than ever. The answer to bloodshed was not more bloodshed. The Philippines shared the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people to achieve sustainable economic development but also espoused the sovereign right of all States to protect themselves. There were over two million Filipinos working in the Middle East and his Government was profoundly concerned for their safety and that of all those affected.

103. Stability and progress depended on a peaceful solution but any proposed solution must first and foremost be found within in the region and between the two parties. A lasting solution could not be imposed from the outside, either unilaterally or multilaterally. Every effort must be made to find a working solution, to stop provocations and to make the world a safer and more prosperous place.

104. **Mr. Bamya** (Observer for the State of Palestine) thanked delegations for their principled support of a draft resolution grounded in international law. He said that United Nations resolutions and international law were sometimes portrayed as an obstacle to peace, but if violations of international law were accepted, it would mean the end of the world system established after 1945. The Second World War and its horrors, including the Holocaust, had shown that international law was essential.

105. The draft resolution was not anti-Israel; it opposed colonialism and upheld the right to self-determination. Israel had chosen to become a colonial power; if it made a different choice, which the international community should certainly urge and compel it to do, the attitude and the resolutions would be very different. The only possible stance the United Nations could take was to oppose colonialism and support the right to self-determination. The same rules must apply to all. The

path to peace was not to sacrifice international law in order to shield Israeli colonialism; rather, it was to uphold international law and allow all peoples in the region to live in freedom, in dignity and in peace. He hoped that one day all Palestinians would enjoy all the rights enshrined in the resolutions and would no longer need to speak of rights of which they were deprived. Until that day, it was the responsibility of the international community to reaffirm those rights, to help Palestine defend them and to hold the violators accountable. Palestine had its flaws but that could never serve as a justification for continued oppression, since the Palestinian people was entitled to self-determination. It was only fair and just for Palestine and Israel to be held accountable to the same standards as each other and everyone else.

106. **Ms. Furman** (Observer for Israel) said that her delegation was deeply disappointed at the Council's rejection of the crucial amendment presented by her delegation. There was no justification for not supporting a humanitarian call for the release of Israeli civilians and the abducted bodies of fallen Israeli soldiers. By refusing to support the amendment, the Council had denied the rights of the mothers of Abera Mengistu and Hisham al-Sayed to know the fate of their sons and the rights of the mothers of Hadar Goldin and Oron Shaul to give their sons a proper burial. The draft resolution was yet another example of the one-sided and inflammatory campaign against Israel at the United Nations. Over the years, the Palestinians had seized on any convenient platform to exploit the United Nations system and score cheap political points, which were apparently more valuable than working towards meaningful improvement in the lives of the Palestinian people.

107. While it emphasized the dire conditions in the Gaza Strip, the draft resolution did not even mention that Gaza was controlled by the terrorist organization Hamas, through violence, repression, the denial of basic human rights and the misuse of economic resources. Incredibly, no mention at all was made of Hamas in the draft resolution. The fact that the Palestinian leadership had never taken responsibility for the welfare of its own people was also ignored. Instead, the Palestinian Authority was commended for improving governance, the rule of law and human rights. In reality, the Palestinian leadership excelled mainly in corruption. It continued to incite enmity against Israel on a daily basis and instil hatred and extremism in the hearts and minds of the Palestinian youth.

108. It was time for the members of the Council to realize that the draft resolution did not enhance cooperation between Israelis and Palestinians or improve the lives of the Palestinians. Her delegation was therefore truly sorry that it had been adopted.

109. **Mr. Bermúdez Álvarez** (Uruguay) said that the draft resolution was a reminder of a problem that must be given urgent attention and of the grave needs of the Palestinian people, which should remain on the Council's agenda. Regarding the paragraphs on the release of prisoners and the return of bodies, Uruguay had supported both the Israeli amendment and the oral revision on the basis that it was crass to be haggling over prisoners and bodies. It was offensive and even immoral that there was not already agreement on that point. In addition, Uruguay had no objection to naming the groups that stubbornly refused to return the bodies of people who had inadvertently crossed borders. That had been his delegation's constant position as a member of the Security Council and in other forums where the issue had been discussed. For consistency, therefore, Uruguay had supported all the proposed changes to the draft resolution that referred to improving the condition of prisoners or to the return of prisoners or bodies.

110. **Mr. Mustafa** (Sudan) said that his country had voted in favour of the draft resolution, in line with its historical position that the Palestinian people had the right to a viable State with East Jerusalem as its capital, and in order to meet the urgent needs of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Absolute support for the Palestinian people meant supporting freedom, human rights and the right to self-determination, and especially the right of the Palestinians to live in dignity in an independent State with East Jerusalem as its capital, pursuant to the relevant United Nations resolutions.

111. **The President** said that she took it that the Council wished to take note of the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/73/84-E/2018/72).

112. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.